271 more leaves folded together in the form of a bag, like the leaf
475 spoon, or his right hand with which he scoops up the water and
494 throws it into his mouth with rapid swinging motions.

In dense forest where no stream is known to be nearby -- this,
271 to be sure, is a rare occurrence, for instance, when they have lost
137 the way or if suddenly somebody falls ill from thirst, or the like --
824 one can, at times, open a hidden source of water in the water liana Dichapetalum holosericeum Engl. (angŋgɔ̃l-ndɨ̀lɨ̀k III Ntum, ngɔ̃l-ndɨ̀lɨ̀k III Fang). Unfortunately, however, this plant does not occur everywhere; it grows straight up from the ground to the highest tree tops and can attain the thickness of the upper thigh, but usually it measures only 40 centimeters in circumference. In order to get water, one only needs to cut off the liana as high as one can reach, something that can be done with one blow, and then cut off a piece from the lower half. This is held vertically so that the water cannot run out, and it is then gradually inclined over a drinking vessel, for instance, leaves folded together in the form of a bag. The water, which -- as the Negroes assert -- is supposed to be good for the stomach, now flows out of the stem in a strong stream, hissing all the while. It is quite astonishing what quantities of water the liana contains. A piece as long as one's arm suffices to quench the most violent thirst and, according to my estimates contains one and a half liters. If one needs more, he simply cuts off additional pieces, and since the water cannot flow out of the cut liana because of the air pressure, one always has enough, even for large caravans.

272 As regards indulgents, the Pangwe have sugarcane sap, banana
273 wine, palm wine, and tobacco. In their use of these they are, on the whole, quite moderate. In this respect, the importation of rum would certainly have created a change for the worse if in 1906 the prohibition against the sale of intoxicating liquors had not intervened.

1. Sugarcane sap.

272 The sap contained in sugarcane is extracted in the following manner. The bark of the sugarcane is splintered off with a knife, and its meat is sucked out, or one presses out the sap and then drinks it as "sugar wine (mayɨ̀[k] me nkɔ̀k)." The latter method of

272 extraction occurs only in the southern Pangwe region and /164/ in two forms. The first is as follows. The cane is cut into pieces from six to eight centimeters long; the meat of the cane is removed by sticking the spiked stalk of Trachyphrynium danckelmanianum Braun et K. Schn. (nsō' I) through it and scraping back and forth for a while (Fig. 104). A leaf is placed underneath to catch the scrapings, and later they are put in a basketwork plate and pressed out by hand. A second, more refined procedure consists of removing the bark from the cane with a knife and pounding it in a wooden trough. The pulp thus obtained is put in a sugar press (ojā m), a crude piece of basketwork in rectangular form, made of Ancistrophyllum (nkāne), of one narrow sides end in loops through which two sticks are pushed. One of these is stuck through two poles planted in the ground, each with a hole drilled through the middle; the other stick is placed on top of the two poles. When the press is to be used, /Fig. 106 appears here in the original text/ a vessel (pot) is placed under it, the upper stick is taken off, the sugarcane pulp is placed in the plaited container, the stick is turned with both hands, and in this way the press is wrung dry. The sap, which can be drunk right away, is made primarily for elderly people who are no longer able to chew sugarcane meat; it is also made for medicinal purposes. /165/

[166 167]

2. Banana wine.

• 273 This wine is obtained from ripe bananas or plantains. They are peeled, cut in half, and then placed in a pot filled with water. The pot is covered with a perforated leaf and set in the sun for a day. The fluid is then carefully poured off, put in a calabash, and again set in the sun for a brief period of time. This banana wine or plantain wine (the latter is supposed to taste even better) is known only in the northern Pangwe region. Among the Jaunde it is valued very highly, as much as palm wine, which is attested to, among other things, by its special popularity with the older chiefs who are known as connoisseurs. This beverage, indeed, is not at all bad, and it is, incidentally, also popular with the Whites.

273

3. Palm wine.

The Pangwe make palm wine primarily from the oil palm Elaeis guineensis L. (alɛ́n). In very rare cases they make it from the raffia palm, while in the extreme north it is also made from

[272 342]

Fig. 106. A Ntum Man Using a Spiked Stalk to Scrape Sections of Sugarcane in Order to Press Sugar Wine out of it.

the Deleb palm. As a result, its abundance and quality depend upon the range of the oil palm, that is to say, actually only the northern Pangwe region, especially the Mwele, Jaunde, and Bene areas and to a lesser extent the Bulu area, come into consideration here. In the south, on the other hand, the making of palm wine is practically unknown; there oil palms are so sparse that they give their name to nearby localities (Alén, Malén) because they

● 273 are regarded as a curiosity. Wine made from the raffia palm, supposed to have a bitter and not very pleasant taste, is known by hearsay to the southern Pangwe. It may even be that they produce it in isolated places, but I never saw or drank it. On the other hand, the [137] wine made from the Deleb palm, Borassus flabellifer var. aethiopum Mart. (Mwele, awui), which in very isolated patches extends into the northernmost part of the Pangwe region (I have observed it myself between Elandi and Abandakudi) has a superb taste and is justifiably valued very highly even though it does not possess the characteristic bouquet of oil palm wine. On my journey through Mwele territory I was told that the palm tree dies if one cuts off its blossoms to make wine, and indeed I saw a whole number of gigantic trunks reaching into the sky, leafless as masts. At the same time I must confess that when I was able to refresh my thirsty throat with this beverage in Simekoa, I hardly considered the price -- the dead palm tree -- too high.

For the Pangwe Yaoundé /Ger., Jaunde/ is the classical land of palm wine or mimbu, as it is called in pidgin English. If one travels through the Jaunde region at the right time of year, he will find a number of calabashes hanging from almost every oil palm, which indicates: "There is palm wine here." /166/

The quality of the wine depends on various circumstances. One very rarely finds the really first-rate wine, which can well stand comparison with inferior champagnes.

Aside from the method of obtaining the wine, the age of the tree plays a certain role. One cannot get good wine from the flowers of young palms. Similarly, only old calabashes, in which palm wine has often been kept, may be used to catch the wine. I am unable to say what other factors determine the superior or inferior taste of their wine. It is certain that, as in the case of our wines, soil and climate are important. My Jaunde in the south, for instance, took all kinds of trouble to serve me with good "stuff," but it was all -- as they themselves admitted -- a beverage of which one could but say: "It looks like wine, but it isn't; it doesn't make you sing, it doesn't make you happy." In any case a person who, after the first trial of a perhaps only moderately successful wine, condemns palm juice in general does it an injustice. One must first get used

273 to its peculiar taste, and anyone who, like myself, has drunk his way from Duala through Bakoko /Koko/ and Bassá country, through the Jaunde and Mwele areas up to the northeastern boundary of the Pangwe region to Kombokotto, knows that one only has to look for a really good drop to find it, and that this is one of the best things available in the Pangwe territory in the way of culinary pleasures.

Usually palm wine is yellowish-white, either dry or more or less sweet, the best being almost transparent in the glass, bubbling like sparkling wine, slightly sweet, and extremely intoxicating. Inferior wine is more opaque, while a very indifferent variety, obtained -- as will be described below -- from the trunk, is not transparent and is covered with foam like soapy water, which it resembles somewhat in taste. All of them, however, have a characteristic and fine bouquet to which, as I have said, one must first become accustomed, but which afterwards he never forgets. When I read through the pages of my diary telling of the days of travel in Yaoundé, the wine bouquet seems to stream forth from them and to embody everything beautiful and characteristic that tropical West Africa offers to the memory.

There are three methods of obtaining the wine. The first two involve cutting down a palm tree about five years old, and for that reason such methods are not very common in the Pangwe region (1).

1. These methods are more frequently used in the Bassá area where the palm trees are so numerous that they can be wasted in this manner.

The first method, which produces the best wine and which in Jaunde is called mayɔ̈ kɨ me mbɔ̈m, is carried out in the following manner. The leaves of the palm tree that has been cut down, the upper leaves in particular, are cut off, and the calabash is put over the cut at the heart of the palm.

In the second method -- mayɔ̈ kɨ me nkɔ̈k, "palm wine from the felled trunk" -- a rectangular hole is cut in the middle of the trunk /167/ down to the pith, about 15 centimeters deep. This is not done, however, until the trunk has lain for a day and has been

●273 covered with old leaf sheath which look like bark and are in turn weighted down with leafstalk ends and the like as a protection against insects. The palm wine gathers in this hole and is scooped out daily. This process lasts from four to five days and produces in all five or more bottles of inferior wine.

Most common is the third method of obtaining wine, namely, from the male or female inflorescences of fully grown trees, that is, ten years old or older (simply: mayǫ́[k] m'alén, "wine from the oil palm"). This procedure, to be sure, is not nearly as simple [407] as the two previous ones since the man must climb up the palm tree and work for quite a long time hanging in a supporting rope, in particular lopping off the leaves. It frequently happens that in his eagerness the man cuts through the supporting rope and falls to the ground; to do this he does not even need to have looked too deeply into a calabash filled with palm wine.

At least two, usually three or four, and more rarely up to six inflorescences on a palm are tapped at the same time since some produce more juice, others less or no juice at all. With four inflorescences, for instance, only two produce juice; with six, only four.

The next step is to remove from below all the leaves of the crown with the exception of the leaf in whose axil the inflorescence is inserted. This is now partly removed, but its lower edge and the part of the lower end of the stalk which is turned away from the inflorescence are left on; otherwise the inflorescence would break off and fall down. A stick is clamped between the inflorescence on the one hand and the leaf that was left standing and the neighboring leaf on the other to prop up the inflorescence which has been deprived of its support. Not until the next day is the work continued. With a two-edged knife a rectangular cutout about six centimeters above the base is excised (in a downward direction) from the husk. The stalk of the inflorescence is cut through here and is taken out, so that on all sides only the husks are left standing. Now the stick can be removed since a prop is no longer needed. After two days the palm wine can be collected. For this purpose, a thin layer of the remaining stalk of the inflorescence is cut off, and the empty husks are stopped up at the tip with old dry husks that have been

273 crumpled up. Then a long-stemmed, fife-like bag is made of five leaf pinnae of the oil palm; this bag is placed at the lower part of the cutout with its "head" down and the tip outward. The bag is pressed to the cutout by means of a little stick made from the bark of an oil palm leafstalk and stuck through the husk on either side /168/. The entire arrangement is designed to prevent insects, such as giant beetles, palm weevils, rose beetles, bees, flies, etc., from penetrating the husk. Furthermore, in order to prevent the wine from running past the bag, the slits at those points where the bag rests against the husks are closed off with the down of oil palm leaf sheaths. On the little stick which holds the bag, a calabash, on which a small leaf funnel is placed, is suspended in such a way that the lower end of the bag extends into the funnel so that here, too, the way will be blocked to uninvited guests from the insect world.

It is necessary to remove the palm wine from the calabash morning, noon, and night, since otherwise it would spoil. Each time, also, a thin layer of the stalk of the inflorescence must again be cut off, and a new bag, as well as a new funnel, must be made. /Fig. 107 appears here in the original text./ In each case, the tapping of a tree lasts for three days and, if there are four tapping places, for instance, yields from six to eight bottles of wine. After this period, the tree is left alone for at least half a year so that it can recuperate; indeed, it is left to itself even longer if enough other palm trees are available.

To improve the wine -- according to the Jaunde -- to make it worse in my opinion -- the Jaunde frequently put the bark of a tree called eyôme (Jaunde) in the calabashes. Fortunately, this tree grows only in the Mwele region, and the Jaunde get it from there. This bark /Fig. 108 appears here in the original text/ makes the palm wine "strong," as they say; that is, it gives the wine intoxicating qualities. Possibly a very small amount of the bark is a beneficial addition, but the excessive amount that the Jaunde add to it harms the pleasant taste of the palm wine. I remember particularly a trick played on me by my boys who had poured together the wine from a number of calabashes, each about a quarter full, for my meal. In each calabash the wine had already been four

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522

times as powerful as usual, and the entire mixture was so strong that it caused violent dizziness and headache.

The palm wine which is obtained from the pith of a tree trunk that is cut down /169/ (mayɔ́[k] -nkɔ̄k) keeps for 24 hours in the house. On the other hand, the wine made from the inflorescences keeps at most half a day, and in great heat it spoils very rapidly, as I observed; it does the same if one takes it along on a trip. For this reason I followed the rule in the palm wine region of always finishing a good wine immediately or at least as soon as possible.

As I have said, the Pangwe are, generally speaking, moderate drinkers, but among them there are also heavy drinkers who regularly get drunk on palm wine. I shall leave undecided the question as to whether the widespread epilepsy (okū būk) in the northern Pangwe region is a phenomenon resulting from excessive indulgence in palm wine on the part of the parents.

4. Tobacco.

Four varieties of tobacco, Nicotiana tabaccum L. (tɛ̄́ III) (1)

1. The native term may have arisen from tabaco.

are found in the Pangwe region. Formerly there was a fifth variety, but its cultivation has been given up. /Fig. 109 appears here in the original text./ With the exception of two that are very similar, the tobacco varieties are easily distinguished by their leaves. The key for determining each is as follows.

A. Leaves are not alated, and the leafstalk is long and clearly defined: esɔ̄́n (esɔ̄́n because of the similarity of the leaves to those of the Hibiscus sabdariffa L.)

B. Leaves are alated

(a) Leaves are narrow, lanceolated: sɔ̄mɔ̄́ IV

(b) Leaves are broad, ovate

1. Blossoms are a bright pink, almost whitish, the leaves being comparatively wider than in the case of the following: nɔ̄dɛbɔ́́no I

224
262 Hunting on foot: Practiced especially by the Pygmies, without dogs. Some Pahouin still hunt down buffalo and forest pig and kill them with boar spears, but they are few. (P. A.)

222 are men who call themselves hunters (3). Income from the sale of
262

3. In some Boulou villages one finds foreign professional hunters, Baya or Kaka usually. Besides, Pygmies are regular hunters for their "landlords." (P. A.)

game meat appears to be practically negligible in family budgets. But, according to the work quoted above, hunting provides about a fifth of the total consumption of meat. Fishing is not unknown, but
221 the techniques are of the simplest. Women sometimes /28/ dam
262 streams to dry up the beds where the fish can be caught. Sometimes fishing with poison is done, and children like to fish with line. But none of the methods is really productive; there are no large weirs, no nets, no canoes. Nutritionists estimate the ration of locally caught fish to be 1 gram per person per day—which is a simply way of underlining the feeble nautical talents of the Pahouin.

260 Agriculture furnishes the basic subsistence. Manioc is used in countless dishes: manioc rolls made from the crushed and boiled tubers, smothered manioc, or manioc fritters; even the leaves are often eaten. The use of leaves for food is perhaps a peculiar trait of Ewondo and Boulou diet. Thirteen kinds of leaves are used in cooking, either as seasoning or as a purée, often to thicken sauces. Along with manioc, the plantain banana provides the basic food. Next comes macabo, Xanthosoma sagittefolia /malanga/. Various kinds of yams are much liked. This gastronomic pattern of the Fang, and
[77] in particular of the Beti, should be enough to prove their foreign origin, because yams, which are tropical rather than equatorial, do not grow at all well in the present habitat of the Pahouin.

Maize is the only cereal currently used as food. It is often served as a dough, as gruel, and even on the cob. Maize beer, outside
[273] certain urban centers, seems to be drunk less than palm wine, (the sap of the Elaeis guineensis). The oil palm, moreover, plays an important part in the diet. A source of lipoids /lipides/ and Vitamin A,

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

this is, because, to a Fang eye, polished brass looks *ndong* (handsome) and is attractive for trade. Vessels are usually placed on top of the fire and not suspended over it; vegetables are frequently placed in stews. No separate dwelling house exists for cooking, it is carried on in the dwelling house. The water used to wash a dirty pot with is often thrown out on the earth floor of the dwelling, children playing in the wet dirt. In all domestic matters the Fang are very filthy. I have on more than one occasion when inside a native hut seen children micturate and defecate on the earth floor close to where the mother was cooking, the women and men present taking very little notice, and only occasionally placing the child outside the door. Cooking is exclusively the duty of women, a *real* man will not cook. Food is often highly seasoned with hot native red and green peppers, and food thus prepared is much appreciated. The food is usually well cooked through, with the exception of plantains which are often only half boiled and served quite hard. Large round stones are used for rubbing and reducing to powder gourd seeds and various tubers. Smoking and salting are the only methods practised for preserving food, and on account of the value of salt and the difficulty of transporting it inland, it is seldom thus employed.

Drinks.—Rum has been carried from the coast by white traders and natives far inland and is used whenever obtainable, but the chief drink is cold water. Palm wine is made called *ewpak*. Except in places where a trade factory existed I have seen very few cases of intoxication among the Fang, but when they can obtain rum it seems to completely demoralize them. Tea and coffee are known to people living near white settlers. When a party of headmen and others have taken a meal at the mission house, tea and coffee were greatly enjoyed and cups frequently re-filled. The first meal is usually about eight or nine o'clock; the natives think the white man eats very early; a mid-day meal is served and the evening repast is usually about sunset.

Food is frequently brought to the men inside the *abeng* (palaver house); at other times an entire family eats together inside the dwelling house. No ceremonies whatever precede the commencement of meals. When a son is born, or on the occasion of a wedding, and after some large palaver has been settled, a feast is usually given. Invited guests and strangers partake together with the town folk of the food prepared; it is usually served on the earth floor of the palaver house, on plantain leaves, and in cooking pots, each person helping himself. The women do not eat with the men inside the palaver house.

Mode of preparing Meat.

Bo do ndzie mvel, e vim a ne ndzitil: a kopo kwam ndlo ndzie, he kele tôt: he ndzi ne nye: he tsôt ndzil: he kôzi nye ndzak ôzi he nem ndzam: kotto tjwô: kôpye vul: he kopo nwam vul: he kôzi nye ê nvet: ndzabe ji: ye tsili nvet ndzam: nvam ndzam ndzam.